

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A stopper device for bottles equipped with a neck compatible with a water fountain which are intended for containing drinking water or another liquid, said stopper device being used during the storage and transport of the liquid and for cooperating with a feeding tube for the purpose of dispensing the liquid, said device being placed in a capsule which includes an external skirt to receive the neck of a bottle,

said stopper device comprising an internal duct to pass the feeding tube and to support a stopper, wherein the stopper is made from a flexible and elastic material and is formed of a single piece, and

wherein the stopper includes a flexible part of a valve becoming narrower at an end and having closely set straight walls which form a slot, the closing and opening of which function as a valve such that when one wall is laid against the other, passage of the liquid contained in the bottle is prevented and wherein a closed position of the flexible part is assisted by hydrostatic pressure when the bottle is filled, and by mechanical means, such as reinforcements exerting a thrust on the walls, said thrust being oriented at 90° with respect to the slot.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Previously Presented) The device as claimed in claim 1, wherein the stopper has in its lower part an annular hollow part which fits onto the duct and which terminates in an annular flange serving as a seal on which the end of the neck of the bottle rests.

4. (Previously Presented) The device as claimed in claim 1, wherein the feeding tube can slide freely within the duct when the liquid is drawn off, and an inner wall of the duct includes a

sealing bead opposing passage of the liquid flowing incidentally outside the feeding tube.

5. (Previously Presented) The device as claimed in claim 1, wherein a bottom of the capsule is equipped, at a location intended for passage of the feeding tube in the duct, with a diaphragm which yields under the effect of the impact exerted by the feeding tube and which consists, for example, of daisy petals.

6. (Previously Presented) A stopper for use in containers that dispense liquid and include a neck portion, said stopper being made from flexible and elastic material and housed within the neck portion, said stopper comprising a fixed part surmounted by a flexible part that narrows at an end and with closely set straight walls forming a slot functioning as a valve, the opening and closing of which is actuated by virtue of the elasticity and flexibility of the material of the flexible part and by means of hydrostatic pressure exerted by the liquid filling the container.

7. (Previously Presented) The stopper as claimed in claim 6, wherein rigidity of the walls is reinforced by at least one reinforcement member positioned at 90° with respect to the slot of the flexible part.

8. (Previously Presented) The stopper as claimed in claim 6, wherein the fixed part is in the form of a hollow barrel fastened to a body of the stopper by being fitted onto it.

9. (Currently Amended) A stopper assembly for containers intended for housing liquid and for cooperating with a feeding tube for the purpose of dispensing the liquid, said assembly comprising:

a capsule having an external skirt which receives a neck of a container, and an internal duct structured and arranged to pass the feeding tube therethrough and to work in cooperation with a stopper, the stopper including:

a flexible member, the flexible member including at least two walls which cooperate to form a slot which when open allows the passage of water housed in the container therethrough,

and when closed prevents the passage of water housed in the container therethrough, wherein the opening and closing of the slot is actuated by virtue of the elasticity and flexibility of the material of the flexible member and by means of hydrostatic pressure exerted by the liquid filling the container.

10. (Previously Presented) The stopper assembly as claimed in claim 9, wherein the stopper is made from a flexible and elastic material, and is formed of a single piece.

11. (New) A stopper device for bottles equipped with a neck compatible with a water fountain which are intended for containing drinking water or another liquid, said stopper device being used during the storage and transport of the liquid and for cooperating with a feeding tube for the purpose of dispensing the liquid, said device being placed in a capsule which includes an external skirt to receive the neck of a bottle,

said stopper device comprising an internal duct to pass the feeding tube and to support a stopper, wherein the stopper is made from flexible and elastic material and is formed of a single piece, and

wherein the stopper includes a flexible part of a valve becoming narrower at an end and having closely set straight walls which form a slot, the closing and opening of which function as a valve such that when one wall is laid against the other, passage of the liquid contained in the bottle is prevented, and wherein a bottom of the capsule is equipped, at a location intended for passage of the feeding tube in the duct, with a diaphragm which yields under the effect of the impact exerted by the feeding tube and which consists, for example, of daisy petals.

12. (New) The stopper device of claim 1, wherein the closing and opening of the slot is assisted by hydrostatic pressure when the bottle is filled.